

Message Text

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21

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 5108

E.

NQ 11652: GDS

TAGS: ESTC, PFOR, SP, CU, US

SUBJ: TRADE WITH CUBA: CHRYSLER ESPANA

REF: (A) MADRID 4841 (B) STATE 164127

1. MINISTER OF COMMERCE CERON TELEPHONED ME EVENING JULY 22 TO INQUIRE WHETHER IN LIGHT OF WHAT I HAD TOLD HIM (REFTEL (A) I HAD RECEIVED ANY FURTHER WORD FROM WASHINGTON ON THIS SUBJECT. HE SAID THAT HE HAD INFORMED THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AT ITS MEETING ON JULY 16 OF US REFUSAL TO AUTHORIZE CHRYSLER TO SEELL HEARSE TO CUBA AND THAT THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE EXPRESIONS OF "INDIGNATION" FROM VARIOUS MINISTERS. CERON SAID HE HAD URGED THAT NO PRECIPITATE ACTION BE TAKEN AND INDICATED THAT HE WAS IN TOUCH WITH ME TO TRY TO WORK THE MATTER OUT. CERON AGAIN STRESSED THAT IT WAS "INTOLERABLE" THAT US SHOULD INTERFERE WITH THE ACTIVITIES OF A SPANISH COMPANY (CHRYSLER ESPANA) IN ITS SALE OF THESE HEARSE TO ANOTHER SPANISH COMPANY (BARREIROS) FOR EXPORT TO CUBA. HE BELIEVED IT WAS NOW ONLY A QUESTION OF TIME BEFORE BARREIROS) WHICH HAS CONSIDRABLE INFLUENCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT) WOULD INFORM THE PRESS OF THIS SITUATION WHICH WOULD THEN PROVOKE STRONG REACTIONS.

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2. I TOLD CERON THAT I HAD NOT BEEN IN TOUCH WITH HIM AGAIN BECAUSE I HAD RECEIVED NO FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON. I AGAIN WENT OVER WITH HIM THE REQUIREMENTS OF US LAW AND REGULATIONS WHICH APPLIED EQUALLY TO COMPANIES WITH US OWNERSHIP IN WHATEVER COUNTRY THEY ARE LOCATED. AS LONG AS PRESENT US LAWS AND REGULATIONS REMAIN WHAT THEY ARE, CHRYSLER WOULD NOT BE ABLE LEGALLY TO CONSUMATE THIS SALE. I RECOGNIZED THIS WAS NOT SITUATION FACTORY FROM GOS POINT OF VIEW, BUT THESE WERE THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION. HOWEVER, I PROMISED TO REPORT TO WASHINGTON THE MINISTER'S COMMENTS.

3. COMMENT: I THINK THAT I CAN TEMPORIZE SOMEWHAT LONGER WITH THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE ON THIS ISSUE. HOWEVER, IT WOULD HELP IF I COULD BE INSTRUCTED TO GIVE CERON SOME HOPE THAT THIS QUESTION MAY BE RESOLVED WITHIN A RELATIVELY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. I STILL FEEL THAT WE WOULD DO WELL TO AVOID A FURTHER CONTENTIOUS ISSUE WITH GOS, PARTICULARLY OVER SUCH A SMALL MATTER, WHEN WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF DELICATE BASE NEGOTIATIONS.
STABLER

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